

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI
EASTERN DIVISION**

JOHN JONES,)	
)	
Plaintiff,)	
)	
v.)	No. 4:15CV632 HEA
)	
ST. LOUIS COUNTY JUSTICE, et al.,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

OPINION, MEMORANDUM AND ORDER

This matter is before the Court upon the motion of plaintiff (registration no.159081), an inmate at the St. Louis County Justice Center, for leave to commence this action without payment of the required filing fee. For the reasons stated below, the Court finds that plaintiff does not have sufficient funds to pay the entire filing fee and will not assess an initial partial filing fee at this time. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1). Furthermore, based upon a review of the complaint, the Court finds that the complaint should be dismissed pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B).

28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1)

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1), a prisoner bringing a civil action in forma pauperis is required to pay the full amount of the filing fee. If the prisoner has insufficient funds in his or her prison account to pay the entire fee, the Court must assess and, when funds exist, collect an initial partial filing fee of 20 percent of the greater of (1) the average monthly deposits in the prisoner's account, or (2) the average monthly balance in the prisoner's account for the prior six-month period. After payment of the initial partial filing fee, the prisoner is required to make monthly payments of 20 percent of the preceding month's income credited to the prisoner's account. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(2). The agency having custody of the prisoner will forward these

monthly payments to the Clerk of Court each time the amount in the prisoner's account exceeds \$10, until the filing fee is fully paid. *Id.*

Plaintiff has submitted an affidavit and a certified copy of his prison account statement for the six-month period immediately preceding the submission of his complaint. A review of plaintiff's account indicates an average monthly deposit of \$0, and an average monthly balance of \$0. Plaintiff has insufficient funds to pay the entire filing fee. Accordingly, the Court will not assess an initial partial filing fee at this time.

28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B), the Court must dismiss a complaint filed in forma pauperis if the action is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, or seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. An action is frivolous if it "lacks an arguable basis in either law or fact." *Neitzke v. Williams*, 490 U.S. 319, 328 (1989); *Denton v. Hernandez*, 504 U.S. 25, 31 (1992). An action is malicious if it is undertaken for the purpose of harassing the named defendants and not for the purpose of vindicating a cognizable right. *Spencer v. Rhodes*, 656 F. Supp. 458, 461-63 (E.D.N.C. 1987), *aff'd* 826 F.2d 1059 (4th Cir. 1987). A complaint fails to state a claim if it does not plead "enough facts to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face." *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007).

The Complaint

Plaintiff, an inmate at the St. Louis County Justice Center, brings this action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, alleging violations of his civil rights. Named as defendants are: the St. Louis County Department of Justice Services; Ann Kearney (Nurse); Paul Listenberger (Food Service Manager); Unknown Gerard (Nurse); and Rita Hendricks (Medical Director).

Plaintiff asserts that on February 13, 2015, he was working in his job as a food service worker/porter doing cleaning and gathering and breaking down boxes. Plaintiff states that other inmates were in the same area and working on “breaking down tables.” He claims that they were moving the tables and “some of the wheels had fallen from under one of the tables causing it to fall over on the plaintiff as he was attempting to retrieve and pick up boxes from that area.” Plaintiff states that the “heavy metal table fell upon the plaintiff’s left leg and foot area, breaking two toes.”

Plaintiff states that he was taken to medical where he was provided with x-rays to assess the damage, but that “no other medical treatment was conducted.” Although plaintiff states that “no other treatment was provided,” in his next statement, he asserts that he has been “walking with the aid of crutches and other items provided.” He admits also to being provided with gauze sponges and tape to wrap his foot and toes with.

Plaintiff next asserts that he has requested and been approved to see an outside foot specialist, although he complains that it has taken more than a month to get the outside appointment. Plaintiff seeks damages for his alleged pain and suffering.

Discussion

The complaint is silent as to whether defendants are being sued in their official or individual capacities. Where a “complaint is silent about the capacity in which [plaintiff] is suing defendant, [a district court must] interpret the complaint as including only official-capacity claims.” *Egerdahl v. Hibbing Community College*, 72 F.3d 615, 619 (8th Cir. 1995); *Nix v. Norman*, 879 F.2d 429, 431 (8th Cir. 1989). Naming a government official in his or her official capacity is the equivalent of naming the government entity that employs the official. *Will v. Michigan Dep’t of State Police*, 491 U.S. 58, 71 (1989). To state a claim against a municipality or a government official in his or her official capacity, plaintiff must allege that a policy or

custom of the government entity is responsible for the alleged constitutional violation. *Monell v. Dep't of Social Services*, 436 U.S. 658, 690-91 (1978). The instant complaint does not contain any allegations that a policy or custom of a government entity was responsible for the alleged violations of plaintiff's constitutional rights. As a result, the complaint fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted. As such, plaintiff's complaint for deliberate indifference to his serious medical needs in violation of the Eighth Amendment will be dismissed.

Accordingly,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that plaintiff's motion to proceed in forma pauperis [Doc. #2] is **GRANTED**.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the plaintiff shall not be required to pay an initial filing fee at this time.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this action is **DISMISSED** pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that all other pending motions are **DENIED AS MOOT**.

An Order of Dismissal will accompany this Memorandum and Order.

Dated this 7th day of May, 2015



HENRY EDWARD AUTREY
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE